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3 March 1960



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

3 March 1960

DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

OK
Berlin Air Corridors: Moscow's immediate denunciation of reports that the United States will resume flights to Berlin above 10,000 feet suggests that the USSR hopes to exploit differences among the three Western powers by warning that unilateral action would have an adverse effect on the May summit meeting. A Soviet spokesman in East Berlin has declared that, in the absence of an agreement with both the USSR and East Germany, such flights would be regarded as a "unilateral violation of East German air sovereignty" and existing four-power agreements. The statement was probably intended to induce the Western powers to postpone such flights and agree to technical discussions on flight procedures with East German participation.

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NO
Communist China - USSR: The Chinese Communist press and radio in contrast to other bloc media have virtually ignored Khrushchev's trip through India, Burma, and Indonesia. This sparse coverage supports other suggestions of a continuing coolness between Peiping and Moscow and may reflect irritation at Khrushchev's failure to support Peiping in its disputes with India and Indonesia. Communist China could feel that the trip, coming at a time when it had begun to make gestures toward easing strains with these Asian countries, gives Khrushchev a large measure of the credit Peiping had hoped to gain solely for itself.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

OK
Iraq: Baghdad radio on 1 March carried a statement by Aziz Sharif, secretary general of the Peace Partisan movement, announcing that a mass meeting of the Partisans in Baghdad during late March would again, like last year's, be under Qasim's

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patronage and would be addressed by the Iraqi premier. Qasim's strategy seems to be to treat the Peace Partisans as a nationwide nonpolitical movement in an attempt to undercut Communist control of the Partisans, who have functioned as the principal Communist front in Iraq. Last week Qasim rejected the application of the orthodox Communists for legal recognition as a political party. [REDACTED]
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NO
Watch Committee Conclusion - Middle East: [In the Middle East present evidence does not indicate that either the UAR or Israel is deliberately planning to initiate hostilities in the near future. The disposition and readiness of UAR forces and precautionary military measures by Israel continue the risk that any local incidents could reach more serious proportions.] [REDACTED]

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OK
*Jordan-Israel: The food-grain crop in Jordan is in danger of being totally destroyed by drought, and the government as well as the public is becoming panicky over an already short supply of drinking water. Similar but less critical conditions exist in Israel, where drought is likely to result in large crop and livestock losses. Jordan and Israel are likely to request emergency American assistance.

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OK
*Jordanian Premier Hazza al-Majali issued a defense order on 2 March requisitioning all water resources within Amman and authorizing the Municipal Council to take all measures necessary to secure Amman's water resources. The premier also said that the cabinet has decided to waive all taxes on livestock for this year. [REDACTED]

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NO
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Afghanistan: Foreign Minister Naim, in a press interview a few days prior to Khrushchev's arrival, said that President Eisenhower's visit to Kabul had not resulted in any greater understanding on the part of the West. He also accused the United States of tying its military aid to membership in military pacts, a condition unacceptable to Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister expressed appreciation for American economic aid. However, he reiterated Kabul's determination on the Pushtoonistan issue and his intention to discuss economic aid with Khrushchev. Naim seemed to reflect the opinion that the US should be able to exercise some control over Pakistani propaganda.

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III. THE WEST

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NO
Sweden: The US Embassy has described Foreign Minister Unden's speech of 29 February as a thinly veiled attack on the Western position in the Geneva talks on nuclear testing. Unden

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expressed the belief that the USSR is ready to accept an agreement "which from the point of view of control is still imperfect, but which is nonetheless relatively satisfactory." He concluded that such an agreement would "be better than none at all or an agreement which leaves the field wide open for underground tests of quite considerable effect." Unden's remarks, although focusing on the need for an international agreement, may stem in part from domestic political considerations. The governing Social Democratic party is deeply divided on the issue of acquiring a nuclear weapons capability, which Unden opposes, and an international agreement would enable the party to avoid a decision.

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR Denounces Reported US Plan to Conduct High-Altitude Flights Into Berlin

Moscow's prompt and strong reaction to press reports that the US will resume flights in the Berlin air corridors above 10,000 feet suggests that the Soviet leaders view this as an opportunity to test Western unity in the pre-summit period and, if possible, to inject the East Germans into any technical discussion on flight procedures. At the time of the last such flight, in April 1959, the British attitude was that the flights unnecessarily endangered the prospects for the Geneva foreign ministers' talks. Moscow's propaganda and official statements now imply that resumption could have an adverse effect on summit negotiations.

In discussions preceding the Western decision to resume such flights, the British argued against making an open commitment to early action because of the sensitivity of the British public to any seemingly provocative action before the summit. In the initial editorial response, the pro-Conservative Daily Mail on 1 March protested against the "provocative" character of flights at this time and wondered what difference waiting a few weeks would make.

The warning by a Soviet spokesman in East Berlin that flights above 10,000 feet in the absence of an agreement with both the USSR and East Germany would be regarded as a "unilateral violation of East German air sovereignty" and existing four-power agreements probably is aimed at inducing the Western powers to postpone such flights and agree to technical discussions on flight procedures with East German participation. Moscow will probably attempt to increase pressure for negotiations, as it did in 1959, by hinting that possible "incidents" might result. On the flights in the spring of 1959, American C-130s were harassed by Soviet aircraft.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

The Iraqi Situation

Prime Minister Qasim has agreed to continue his role of patron of the Iraqi Peace Partisans, possibly in an effort to transform this important Communist-front group into a non-political nationwide movement. Following his ambiguous statement of 23 February when he declared, among other things, "Henceforth, there will be no society of Peace Partisans," Qasim was visited by Peace Partisan leader Aziz Sharif. On 1 March, Baghdad Radio broadcast a statement by Sharif to the effect that, again this year, a mass meeting of Partisans will be held in late March under Qasim's patronage and addressed by him.

This new endorsement of the Partisans may be a stratagem of Qasim to forestall criticism from the orthodox Communist group by throwing them a sop, while at the same time working to dilute the Partisans' leadership with his own supporters. While he has licensed certain political parties and associations, Qasim has refused to license the Peace Partisans, claiming that "all Iraqis" are for peace. Thus, the Peace Partisans will not have legal status as a party or as a society and accordingly exist at Qasim's sufferance. However, Qasim probably envisages the Peace Partisans as a great mass organization which can be manipulated much like Nasir's National Union in the UAR.

The Communist bloc press and radio, while refraining from any direct criticism of Qasim, have implied dissatisfaction with his handling of the licensing of Iraqi political parties. Moscow has given considerable publicity to newspaper attacks by the orthodox Communist group on the Sayigh splinter group which Qasim licensed as the "Communist Party of Iraq." A quasi-clandestine bloc station has gone even closer to implying criticism of Qasim with a broadcast of 27 February to Turkey charging "reactionary elements" in the Iraqi Ministry of Interior--headed by Qasim's close associate Brigadier Yahya--with responsibility for refusing to license the orthodox Communist group.

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[REDACTED]
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Drought Threatens Jordanian and Israeli Crops

Jordan is threatened with the loss of its entire grain crop, unless rain falls within the next week. There has been no rain since 3 February and the cumulative rainfall this season is the lowest on record. After three years of drought, many springs are drying up, cisterns and reservoirs are far below normal, and a severe shortage of potable water is imminent.

The Jordanian Government and public are becoming panicky. Jordanian officials estimate that even if there is rain this week, this year's shortfall will be 153,000 tons of wheat, 50,000 tons of barley, 8,000 tons of sorghum, and 11,000 tons of vetch.

Crop conditions in Israel are similar, but less critical. The Israeli Ministry of Finance estimates now that at least 60,000 tons of feed grains and 30,000 tons of wheat will be needed to supplement domestic production. If the drought continues through March, these estimates will have to be revised upward.

Complicating the drought in the Levant area is the annual locust threat. Although it is too early in the season to estimate potential locust damage, large swarms have been observed in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Lebanon. The Desert Locust Information Center in London states that infestation may spread to Israel, Iraq, Kuwait, and possibly Syria and Turkey. The locust threat extends as far as Libya, particularly in the Fezzan where all crops were destroyed. Lesser damage has occurred in the coastal regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

Jordan is likely to request emergency aid soon, and requests from Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Libya may also be forthcoming. Israeli Minister of Agriculture Dayan, who will be in the US this week for an Israeli bond drive, intends to discuss possible drought relief with Secretary of Agriculture Benson. [REDACTED]

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Afghan-US Relations Are Affected by Pakistani
Propaganda Attacks

The Afghan Government is adopting a cooler attitude toward the United States as a result of the increasingly unfriendly propaganda now being aimed at Afghanistan by Pakistan. In response to Kabul's Pushtoonistan propaganda campaign, Karachi has stepped up its radiobroadcasts to the same level of virulence often found in the Afghan output.

These attacks produced a strong reaction in Kabul, as shown by Foreign Minister Naim's recent statements in a press interview. Naim said his January meeting with President Ayub merely convinced him that Pakistan intends to maintain a hard line toward Kabul. He noted that Pakistani propaganda and "subversive activities" have recently increased, and he complained that President Eisenhower's visit to Kabul last December has not resulted in any greater understanding by the West of Afghan problems.

Naim reiterated Kabul's long-standing complaint that US military aid to Pakistan has upset the regional balance of power. He pointed out that the United States has given no military assistance to Afghanistan, and he added that "political conditions" attached to US military aid would make it unacceptable in any event. The Afghan foreign minister probably hopes such criticism will persuade the United States to put strong pressure on Pakistan to adopt a less hostile policy.

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